

The Friends of Pueblo City-County Library present

# 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Creative Writing Contest



PUEBLO CITY-COUNTY  
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**Winning Stories 2016**

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# 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Creative Writing Contest

The Friends of Pueblo City-County Library District is pleased to announce the winners of the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Creative Writing Contest. Students in grades 3-12 were invited to write a story about their dream day at the circus. The story must follow this criteria: The last paragraph of the story must contain this exact phrase: “The audience cheered with excitement!” Each story must contain the following words anywhere in the story exactly as given (for example “wrinkle” but not “wrinkled”): performer, oddity, thrill, dazzling, applause and costume. Any entry not containing the above phrase and all six words underlined was disqualified. There were 107 entries this year!

Entries were judged by Friends of the Library board members Eileen Arnot and Becky Sudduth and PCCLD staff member Sara Schwartz. Winners received a certificate of participation, a booklet with the winning stories and a gift certificate to Books Again, the Friends of the Library’s used book store.

The Friends wish to thank the many teachers who supported the creative writing experience by having their students enter the contest.

# Contest Winners

## 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Dermot McCarthy	St. John Neumann Catholic School – Mrs. Starcer
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Surie Guo	Fountain International Magnet School – Mr. Hund
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Cooper Bush	Fountain International Magnet School – Mrs. Cafasso/Mrs. Benavidez
Honorable Mention	Landon Michael Sanders	Fountain International Magnet School – Mr. Hund

## 4<sup>th</sup> grade

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Emma Ballenger	St. John Neumann Catholic School – Mrs. Brown
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	James Swindells	Cesar Chavez Academy – Mr. Rael
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Isabella Guzman	St. John Neumann Catholic School – Mrs. Brown
Honorable Mention	Gianna Coca	St. John Neumann Catholic School – Mrs. Brown

## 5<sup>th</sup> grade

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Zadie Guo	Corwin International Magnet School – Mrs. Sweckard
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Isabella Kilfoy	Daystar Christian School – Mrs. Velbis
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Noah Ray Tivis	Daystar Christian School – Mrs. Velbis

## 6<sup>th</sup> grade

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Noah Schwartz	Connect Charter School – Mrs. Medina
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Audra Bennett	Daystar Christian School – Mrs. Velbis
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Luke Velbis	Daystar Christian School – Mrs. Velbis

## 7<sup>th</sup> grade

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Collin Velbis	Daystar Christian School – Mrs. Velbis
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Sofia Kamal	Connect Charter Academy – Ms. Roberts
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Kristen Williams	Connect Charter Academy – Mrs. Martinez

## 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> grade

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Sierra Adams	East High School – Ms. Vivoda
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Angela Trujillo	East High School – Ms. Vivoda
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Dakota Lucero	East High School – Ms. Vivoda

## 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Piper Murphy	Central High School – Mrs. Canchola
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# What I Did This Summer: The Great Cat Circus

Dermot McCarthy

On the first day of fourth grade, our teacher, Mrs. O'Connell asked us to tell the class about something fun we did over the summer. Chris was first, he told us about a trip to Hawaii with his family. Lauren talked about going to Camp Jackson. Then Mrs. O'Connell called my name, "Shea you're next." I rose and began telling my classmates about my day at the circus with my Nana Louise.

My Nana took me to The Great Cat Circus for my birthday. I had never been to a circus before. When we entered the big red and white tent, we saw hundreds of people sitting in bleachers excitedly talking. It was quite loud. Our seats were in the front row of the center ring. We were only feet from the performers! The smell of the buttered popcorn was making my mouth water. Thankfully, Nana bought us some. Suddenly, the audience hushed, as a man in a red suit and top hat entered the center ring and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls of all ages, welcome to The Great Cat Circus! Prepare to be amazed! Please direct your attention to the ring on your right where the lovely Gabriella and the strongman Austin will perform dazzling acts of acrobatics on the trapeze." The Ring Master had my attention. I watched as a big man entered the ring and climbed the ladder to a platform thirty feet up in the air. Then the petite female performer, Gabriella, entered the ring. Her costume was amazing! It was a purple leotard covered with beads that shone like hundreds of golden stars. While she climbed up to the platform, the man hung from his knees from the trapeze and began to swing. When he was swinging

fast enough, Gabriella stepped off the platform and began to drop. Just when I thought she would fall to her death, Austin swung and grabbed her by the wrists. He flung her up into the air and she spun and flipped around. She even did a triple back flip! Each time I was so scared that he would not catch her. I was so nervous, that I ate all of our popcorn without even realizing it. What a thrill it was to watch! The audience's applause was so loud!

The second act was a lion tamer named Jewel. She and her five lions were in a cage in the ring on the left. She had her lions jump onto stands and rear up on their back legs and roar. They also jumped through flaming hoops. I was amazed by these huge creatures. They could kill the tamer at any moment, but she kept them under control with her whip. One lion did not want to go back to its stand. It bared its huge teeth at the tamer. I was really scared for her. For her finale, she actually put her head inside one of the lion's jaws! It was crazy!

I could tell my class was really enjoying hearing about the circus. They would find what I said next unbelievable. My favorite act was Aviator. The Ring Master announced, "Finally, the act you have all been waiting for, the oddest oddity of all time, put your hands together for Aviator, the great, the world's only flying cat!" I thought, yeah right, a flying cat, as if. But out came a small Calico cat with a rocket strapped to her back! Suddenly some twenty hoops were lit on fire. We were so close, I felt the heat on my face. Aviator took off and flew through the hoops at such speed, she was a blur. She did figure eights, sharp turns, spins and dives. I have never seen anything like it in my life! The audience cheered with excitement! It was an amazing way to end my dream day at the circus with my Nana. I finished by saying, "I wish you could have been there." As I sat down, Mrs. O'Connell said, "Thank you Shea; that sounds amazing. Everett, that is a hard act to follow, but you are up next."



# My Dream to the Circus

Surie Guo

I woke up on a nice and sunny day. I was still asleep when my alarm went off. I accidentally fell off my bed. How embarrassing! I got up and yawned, "What a beautiful day." I got myself dressed in my sky blue skirt and tried to fit myself in my dark purple shirt. It was too small for me so it made me look like a little funny circus clown. I tried on my new yellow shirt. Ok, then I needed some energy. My stomach was growling like a bear without meals. How about breakfast? I went downstairs and fixed myself my favorite breakfast cinnamon rolls. Then I saw some tickets to the circus on the brown wooden table. Oooooooooooooo! I loved the circus so I went to brush my teeth, got into my mom's car and yelled, "Mom, hurry up! Take me to the circus."

"OK, honey but what is the magic word?"

"Please!"

"Ok, I'm coming honey," she said at last.

She was finally coming and it had been one billion years already. That was taking way too long. Oh, I saw her then.

"Hi mom."

"So honey where do you want to go again?"

"Mom I told you I want to go to the circus."

"Ok honey, you don't have to yell."



I was really worried that we were going to be late to the circus. We drove to the circus. I saw the audience and I quickly sat with them. My mom sat with me. The dazzling colorful lights shot on the stage. The performer came on stage and it was a weird looking clown wearing a Halloween costume. Everyone felt funny about the oddity of the costume which had three eyes, one leg and two feet. It started to dance to jazzy loud music. Well, that was weird. Then a group of animals came on stage. There were lazy fat pigs with a guitar, fluffy white sheep with violins, rickety chickens dancing, a dog in a red collar doing cartwheels and black and white cows singing, "Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o..." The audience was entertained and started to applaud for the band.

"Woof, woof," suddenly came a sharp loud sound.

"What was that noise?" I asked my mom.

"I don't know, Honey."

In no time the red collar dog on the stage came into action and everyone was frightened. The dog started to tear the audiences clothes and rip their shoes!

"Now what!" I had to think of something, but fast, so I got my mom's purse and I started to throw the stuff at the dog from my mom's purse. But that was not all. The dog came running towards me so I ran as fast as I could and raced to the front of the stage and jumped onto it. "I'm on the stage now. What should I do?" I murmured to myself out of breath. Maybe I can do it. I started to perform cartwheels without stopping. Surprisingly the dog stopped chasing me and joined me for more and more cartwheels. The audience cheered with excitement! I loved the thrill of performing cartwheels. My mom's voice came to me, "Why are you rolling around on your bed? Get up! Your favorite breakfast is ready. Cinnamon rolls!"

# Baxter Circus in Baxtons

Cooper Bush

One hot summer morning Pat the Pickle, Pacman Potato, Jeffery Juice Box, and Icee Ice Cream, worked at the circus. The circus was called, "Baxter Circus in Baxtons." They drove to the circus. When they arrived, the circus was quiet. They walked in and turned on the lights. Nobody was there yet so they opened up the concession stands and raked the arena.

Later in the day, the crowd arrived and the benches filled up. The applause from the crowd started the show. Each character wore a clown costume and they came out hitting each other with balloon swords. The crowd roared with laughter at such an oddity. Several performers lined up in rows, then they formed a circle and threw a performer high into the air. A thrill went through the crowd when it happened. The lights on the top of the tent were dazzling. Down in the tent, elephants rumbled, dogs barked and many other loud things went on making sound. There were dogs jumping on elephants' backs and tigers jumping through rings of fire. The crowd was eating popcorn, cotton candy and drinking pop. Everyone was happy! The circus went on and on and on.

Did I mention cats? Well there's a kicker, there were five dozen cats. Big, little, orange, black, grey, and yellow ones. The cats were everywhere and still moving. Some people fell out of their seats trying to keep up with all the animals.

The rest of the crowd fell out of their seats laughing. Some of the dogs and cats ran into each other, sneezing. Then they ran away terrified of each other. When they realized who they ran into they stopped running and sneezed. Then, they carried on doing their business.

Suddenly, all the dazzling lights turned off and the only light was from the ring of fire. Someone in the crowd screamed, the lights turned back on and, there, in the middle of the arena was a cannon. The crowd gasped when they saw a man crawl into the cannon. Pat the Pickle went to the back of the cannon and lit the rope. A big screen counted, "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, blast off!" The crowd screamed at the noise of the cannon and the man went blasting off and into a net, splat! The audience cheered with excitement! This was the end of the circus. Pat the Pickle, Packman Potato, Jeffery Juice Box, and Icee Ice Cream got back into their regular clothes and went home to celebrate. They were all happy and ready for a pizza party.



# The Circus Ghosts

Landon Michael Sanders

Beep, beep, beep. “Ugh,” I moaned. The blazing yellow fiery sun was shining its dazzling sparks of light on me. My face was sizzling hot. Creak. My bed was creaking like an ancient mummy coffin. I quickly dressed myself with a cloud white shirt and a pair of ocean blue pants. I thundered to the American flag red kitchen. I made a scrumptious breakfast, I got a stuttering message. It was a thrill. I got a message to perform at the circus! I froze with amazement. “I’m going to perform at the circus! I am going to be the best performer on the stage,” I clucked. I rapidly rushed to get my costume on which was a sparkly ghost white shirt and a pair of sand yellow khaki pants. I also got a spider like black tie which hung from my neck like a fly got stuck to a spider web. I flung to the door like a grasshopper trying to get away from a vicious blood thirsty bat. My graceful legs gave it their all and launched me out the big hard as stone door.

I quickly ran to my new Honda which was shiny and silver. I opened the door sat down and swiftly twisted the metal key and before you could say chicken pot pie I was lickety split on my way like a hawk. Before I knew it I arrived at the circus. It was like I teleported there. Then I heard the circus music, “D da da a da da da da da da afro circus afro



circus.” I got a spark of happiness mixed with a little nervousness. I silently speed walked into the noisy circus and then I heard a boom and an applause. I suddenly felt nervous right at that moment. Although I was nervous I still wanted to do my act even though I might freak out and lose total control. I decided to do it.

“Attention everyone!” the announcer boomed. “Number three twenty five you are up.”

“Oh snap,” I mumbled. I was number three twenty eight! I quickly ran to my room and washed my muddy face.

“Number three twenty six,” shouted the announcer. Then all of the sudden I didn’t want to do my performance. Then I heard a poof, a woosh and a bam. I slightly twisted my head around like an owl. Then I saw it, I saw three golf ball white ghosts. At first I didn’t think they were real but sure enough they were because one said, “I am Jimmy Boo Boo.”

The next one said, “I am Mike Hoo Hoo.”

And finally, the last one said, “I am Steve Boo Hoo.” It was an oddity.

“I am the ghost of past,” thundered Jimmy. “I will show you your past.”

“Ok,” I mumbled. So I went with him through a magical portal thing and on the other side was me this morning. I gasped. “Look,” exclaimed Jimmy. It was me when I was so excited about performing at the circus.

“Why were you so excited this morning but now you are not?” asked the ghost.

“It’s because I’m nervous.”

“You should do it, Mike will tell you why.”

“Ok,” I sighed and we went back through the portal and Mike took me.

“I am the ghost future,” boomed Mike. He took me through another portal. I saw the audience yawning because I didn’t do my act.

“Why?” I asked.

“They really wanted to see your act,” mentioned Mike.

“I will do my best then,” I hollered. Mike took me back through the portal and handed me over to Steve.

“I am the ghost of present,” whistled Steve. And then he took me through another portal.

“You were so afraid but now you’re not,” admitted Steve.

“Yes,” I barked. He took me back through the portal. I climbed to the top and started to walk. I barely made it to the other side. The audience cheered with excitement! I was extremely proud of myself. Then after that I went back home and I lived my happy, happy life.

# A Detective at the Circus

Emma Ballenger

Hello my name is Maggie. I am a dazzling detective. I have solved almost 200 cases, but there was only one when I had to go undercover. Here is the story...It was August 1, 2011. The sun was high and I just got a call that a criminal named Clyde Wylmorson had just escaped jail and joined a circus called Brook and Jon Circus. Chief wanted me to get hired on at the Circus and find Clyde. I was going to be a performer. I hoped that I wouldn’t be hired as a tiger tamer. I went to the ticket booth and asked if the circus was hiring. The man at the booth said the circus was. I asked what positions there were. The man said the circus was desperate for a tiger tamer. I felt so hopeless that I wanted to quit being a detective and be a graphic designer. But I knew I couldn’t. Chief was depending on me to do this; I decided I’ll do it! Then the ticket seller said, “Here’s your costume,” and he handed me a blob of gold. What I saw was beautiful, it had gold everything! I entered the tent through the heavy flap and went to the bathroom to put it on. I walked

out to see that this could be a new book: Where’s Clyde. I went to the boss and asked him if he had someone named Clyde Wylmoreson working for him. Sadly he said yes and he was a clown. I hate clowns! So I went to the dressing rooms and to my surprise, I found Clyde. Luckily, with the makeup I just put on Clyde didn’t recognize me. A small Walkie Talkie suddenly shouted, “Show time,” and all of the performers came out, including me. The boss announced the pairs of performers that would be working together and the only one that caught my attention was, “Clyde the clown with the tiger tamer.” I lit up! We were first to act...and I was a tiger tamer! I was so scared but I decided there was no time to waste so I did it, I rode the tiger! After Clyde was done with his stupid act I put him under arrest. The crowd cheered with excitement and I took him to the chief. It was a thrill. It had some oddity to it but I loved the applause at the end! I’m a pretty good lion tamer but I’m a better detective!



# Dream Day at the Circus

James Swindells

“Welcome to the most amazing circus adventure,” said the man wearing the top hat and a dazzling suit. We were all ready for a thrill. My family was excited to see all the acts. The first performer came out with a tiger and he made the tiger jump through a flaming hot hoop of fire. After that a second act came out, and the tall skinny man wearing a yellow jumpsuit and tall red boots for a costume launched himself with a cannon loaded with a ton of dynamite. The next act earned my applause, it was an old looking magician who got into a weird glass box with water. He had to unlock the chains holding him in. The magician was able to open the lock, wiggle free of the chains and escape the box in two minutes. They monkey act was next, and that was an oddity by itself. The monkey was wearing a red, white and blue suit with stars all over. They had the monkey walk the tightrope from one side to the other.

Now it was time for a break and to get some great circus snacks. I pretended to be a magic act in which I made all the snacks disappear, never to be seen again. Act number five came out and a skilled diver jumped into a shark tank for what seems to be a half an hour. He performed several tricks with riding a shark at the end. The sixth performer was a funny but kind of scary clown, at least to me. The clown was juggling ten pins while on a huge gray, hairy elephant. My mom loved the seventh act, it was a hippo and a longneck giraffe dancing side by side all over the tent. Mom thought it was a thrill to watch. The next act was a short man dressed in a gorilla suit, who did what no one could have believed, he jumped from a hundred foot platform and landed in a round inflatable target. The audience went crazy for it. The ninth act followed when a girl jumped on a moving target. The target was a chimp named Tiny, wearing a red and blue outfit, while the girl wore a yellow and green jumpsuit. The tenth act was awesome, this time a man looped through a tunnel

on his motorcycle going faster and faster. He disappeared for a moment and came back out the same way he went in.

Finally, it was getting close to the end of the show. The last three acts were up and ready to entertain. The tall skinny guy came back out and just like the monkey, he walked and did tricks on the tightrope. Then, a clown came by rolling around the ring in a huge ball. He looked like he was in a giant bubble going through an obstacle. Then the final act was a beautiful lady with a pretty dress and feathers in her hair. She yelled out directions to the cutest poodles I have ever seen. It was a terrific ending to the greatest show. All I can say is the audience was cheering with excitement!



# My Dream Day at the Circus

Isabella Guzman

I remember the funniest day of my entire life. The date was August 26, 2016. My family and I went to the circus because the bravest, best, and coolest tight rope performer in all the land, was going to be there!

When we arrived at the front gates of the circus, my mom and dad dropped my twin sister and me off at the front gates. My sister’s name is Destiney and my name is Sabrina. My sister and I were so excited to go to the circus. Except one thing I didn’t like those clowns because they really scare me. We waited in line for what seemed like to go on forever!

Finally as we entered we saw plenty of things like candy, rides, popcorn, kettle corn, funnel cakes, caramel apples, lemonade, tea, slushies, turkey legs, pretzels, pop machines, ATM’s, balloons, fried pickles, people and of course the performers. I was really hungry, but the problem was I couldn’t choose what delicious snack I wanted. There were so many choices to choose from! Then I made up my mind, cotton candy!

After we ate we started to go on the rides and play some carnival games. We played games and went on rides for about two hours and forty-five minutes. Then it was time for the big show! The announcer announced all the performers and the judges. The tight rope performer looked beautiful in her dazzling costume with a tutu that had pink sparkles and blue ruffles.

The tight rope performer did an excellent job on her act and the audience gave a huge applause. The announcer

announced, “That was the amazing Jenny!” Then he called my name, “Sabrina Lee will you come up for me and do the tight rope?” “I guess,” I responded.

As I climbed up the ladder everyone was cheering for me. I thought since I’m good at balancing I am probably good at this. Although I thought this, I was still scared. As I placed my foot on the rope I could feel the rope wobble a ton. I thought I was going to fall. I was relieved that I made it to the end, but I did. When I got to the end a guy started to balance on the tight rope. He looked really calm. He said to me, “Get on my back and when we get to the other side I will crawl and you will stand on my back. Also I will warn you be awfully careful on my back. Many people fell and died.” “Oh, well that’s too bad.”

When we got to the other side I fell. As I fell I stuck my hand out and got a hold of the rope. Everyone was screaming and I know everyone was scared. The good thing is I was strong enough to pull myself up and get back on the rope. I did a round off and a backflip which impressed the entire audience. Even the clowns were cheering for me. I guess clowns aren’t too scary after all.

The audience cheered with excitement! I thought this day was a big thrill with some oddity in it, but I still was happy to have an amazing circus adventure!



# My Amazing Day at the Circus

Gianna Coca

It was a sunny day in June, I was nine-years old. My friend Kendra and I were standing in front of the ice cream shop. Suddenly we heard a circus performer standing on top of an old truck yelling, "Come to our amazing circus!" He had on a bright yellow suit with dazzling red flakes all over it. Kendra and I were so excited that we shouted, "Hooray!"

They set up a big red and white tent in City Park. There was a big, fat elephant, a tiger, and some wild gorillas. There were trampolines and cannons everywhere. We bumped into one of the announcers when we were messing around, pretending to be circus performers. He told us that he might give us a job as circus performers and he will give us two free tickets to the show.

That day Kendra and I went to go watch the first performance at 1 p.m. It was such a thrill to be there. We listened to every word the ringmaster said and watched all the moves he made, because one day we wanted to be ring masters too. We noticed an oddity. The gorillas were making fun of him when he wasn't looking. We enjoyed the show...

We went home to grab a snack before the next show. We were going to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, but there was no peanut butter. Kendra screamed, "We are out of peanut butter!" I said, "Oh I thought it was an emergency." I guess it is an emergency because you can't make a PB&J without the peanut butter. We heard sirens and started laughing.

On our way back to the circus we saw a lot of police and dog catchers. We ran to the red and white tent to see what had happened. The ringmaster was gone and the gorilla

cages were empty. On video we saw the gorillas tying the ring master up with rope and duct tape and carrying him off. So now there was a mystery to solve.

The ringmaster's assistant asked Kendra and I to be the ring masters for the next show.

There were only two hours to get ready before the next show. Each of us had to make our own costume. Kendra had zebra stripes with red glitter and animals all over it with pink boots. My costume was stylish with red, yellow, and blue sparkles all over and I wore boots with red and blue glitter. We were ready!

Before the show we had to capture the gorillas. Our first idea was to put all of the toys in the cage and wait. We waited fifteen minutes and nothing happened so that wasn't going to work. Our second idea was to put pizza in the cage, but that didn't work because Kendra ate all the pizza. So our last idea was to buy five-hundred bananas and put them throughout the town leading to the cage. That idea worked! We didn't find the ringmaster though. So the show had to go on.

It was a thrill to hear our names announced. The announcer said, "Welcome your new ringmasters for this evening, Amy and Kendra." We heard lots of applause as the show started. We were doing tricks like professionals with the elephants and zebras. For our final trick, we lit the cannon. There was a loud boom and flying 30-feet in the air was the ringmaster. The audience cheered with excitement! The ringmaster was fine and he was able to finish the rest of the shows before the circus left town. The end.



# All Because of an Acrobat's Broken Leg

Zadie Guo

It all happened on a particular day of May. My left foot entered the world beyond the gold gates first, then my right. I was a performer, an acrobat. I had trained in a performing boarding school called St. Surie's School of Circus Arts. I was honored to get permission from old Professor Zyboser to see a very expensive circus performance with a world famous acrobat performing. I picked my seating. It had the perfect views. Then, a loud worried voice boomed into the speakers. Uh oh, something very abominable happened. The famous acrobat twisted an ankle and couldn't perform her act. That was when I realized I could be the one to save the day.

Suddenly, something dreadful made its way into my mind. I didn't know the famous acrobat's part! I didn't have the right clothing on, I was never going to perform in my too big jeans and large t-shirt! And, I was not a bit famous! Luckily, they had a costume that dazzled every time I moved and it was the right size! That was one problem solved! Thankfully, I still knew my act from my last play. It was very silly. I was afraid the audience wouldn't be happy with my act compared to the famous acrobat's act, but I'm thankful enough. As I entered the stage, a thrill of excitement went through me. With its dazzling lights and humongous red curtains, the stage made me look like a rock star, a famous superstar. I stepped onto the small stand that was meant to be for the famous acrobat and began my part as I was caught and lifted by the music's bouncy sound.

I performed with great oddity. Then a voice in the crowded audience shouted, "How horrible!" It seemed to be a man's voice. A few people chanted along with him. I was angry, frustrated. Did I really do that bad? Or did he do it on purpose? To embarrass me? That was when I realized that I was ready to show those people a thing or two which would demonstrate that I was as good as any other acrobat. Just then, a dressed up chicken almost flew onstage! It seemed to have come from backstage. The chicken seemed to be very talented. Then, the chicken laid a large not-very-realistic egg. The audience went wild and they all reached for the not-very-realistic egg, including me. As I almost reached the egg, I stumbled offstage. The egg bounced up and down the crowd like a bouncy ball on a colorful carpet, and so did I. I did backbends and cartwheels on the audience's hands and shoulders. Then the not-very-realistic egg hit the ground silently and it didn't crack up! It turned out the chicken was a robot! A very genius acrobat robot! As I managed to get back on stage, the audience burst into applause. Wasn't I such an

awesome performer! I bet not even a famous acrobat could manage to do that.

You see, the story of this circus adventure was a whole surprise. Making a whole zone happy wasn't that easy, especially when it came to performing at a circus. You had to be funny, attract people and make them enjoy your act, not making any mistakes, and manage to grab for a not-very-realistic egg. The things that happened that day were certainly not on the agenda. But it turned out great! I remembered that after the performance Professor Zyboser came to me with a proud smile and whispered, "The audience cheered with excitement!" and he emphasized, "For you!"





# Circus Time

Isabella Kilfoy

Yippee, today I'm going to the circus in Hollywood. They call it the Dazzling Thrill Seeker. I'm so excited for this circus. The disappointing thing is that I've never been to a circus. I usually ponder on what it will be like. My grandma declares that they are fun and exciting. But grandpa proclaims that he has been to lots of them and he was even in one of them. I just want to know the main idea about them. Wait, maybe I can imagine going to the circus, I have to make it interesting, but not too interesting. Let's see, I think that there could possibly be a humongous tiger that flips over a ginormous tank of fire and gasoline, you have to give every detail about your imaginary circus. Oh, and possibly there is a person that has an extremely flexible body and loves to randomly put his leg over his head and makes the audience an oddity! He is still a marvelous performer. He gets people's applause. You can't forget the dancing elephants; they dance on bouncy balls with stars on them. There are also people that want a blue costume that covers their body, but have to wear hot pink costumes that cover their body. I also think that there will be daring monkeys that juggle pins that are on fire and shoot out of a rocket. Well, I think that I'm being over dramatic but it could possibly happen. Well, let's get back on topic.

There could be an astounding person that looks like a pathetic old grandpa, but is actually someone that is really strong. Though they look old, it doesn't mean that they're not young, or strong. That performer would be outstanding. Wait, I think that I should add the people on those hoop things. I think that you know what I mean. Those hoops that people do fantastic tricks in. The person would have to be a thrill seeker. There will also be a gigantic turtle that runs as fast as the speed of light and gets people's applause. I think that even though turtles are really slow, they can be incredibly fast. Let's see, there will



also be Cousin It, she is related to the Addams Family. Wow, my notion about the circus is over imaginative.

Well, I think that I have thought of an outstanding amount of different ideas for the circus. I think that I will have an exciting time at the circus. I'll see you later. Wow, that was outstanding. It was everything that I hopped for. There was even the tiger that flips over a tank of fire, it was just like I proclaimed. I told you that you had to give every detail to make it true. Well, my grandma said that we are going to the circus in Las Vegas in a few minutes. I'm so excited for this new outstanding circus that I want to think of more things that are amazingly thrilling. Let's start thinking about the acts that would be in the circus. I know, there will be a girl that blows fire out of her mouth. She gets down on her knees and blows the fire out of her mouth. There will even be an elephant that has to walk on stilts. The elephant is painted with a sun bright blue. Of course, this notion is all in my head and imagination but I think that I can be extremely imaginative. I know that you can too. I think that there will be a tiger that knows how to use a pencil. The tiger knows how to draw an intensely tiny earth. Well I think that I will have to leave you to think of more ideas for the circus. I have to dart away. Wait I can't dart away because the car won't start. Wait it just started. Well I'll speak to you all later. Thanks for helping me imagine the circus. Well, we went and had an outstanding time. Guess what, the audience cheered with excitement! It was an outstanding performance. It was almost like the other tremendous circus that I've attended. Thank you. Bye.



# Luke's Best Day at the Circus

Noah Ray Tivis

And here goes our finest performer. Drums please. The drum roll began and then reality came back to him when mom said, "Honey, we are waiting for you." Luke said, "One minute mom." When he went outside, he saw many birds and bugs and trees. Best of all was the sun. The sun was shining bright and it shone so bright that it shone on their pond and windows and even our vehicle. Mom started the car and drove off. When they got there, Luke said, "Hey mom, can we get soda and a hot dog and maybe some popcorn?" "Sure honey, we can get that." As they all went to buy their tickets a young man opened the door for them. When that took place mom said, "Thank you kind young gentleman." They both went up to the soda stand. Luke asked, "Can we get a root beer float please?" "Sure, that will be \$2.99, please." Mom handed the cashier the money and took the root beer float. Luke said, "As I watched them make the root beer float I saw them make the ice cream." "That's good Luke. These days nothing is homemade any more" she said.

So they went over to the hot dog stand and waited about five minutes. When they ordered their food, they could not wait to eat it. On to the popcorn stand they went. There was no line for popcorn at all. When they ordered it, it looked so good with all the salt and butter with a hint of the secret recipe. They could not wait for it to be in their mouths while watching the show. The lady at the popcorn stand said, "Would you like to buy a VIP ticket on sale for \$1.99? What does it include? It will allow you to see our performers here today and you can upgrade it for \$2.99 extra. And that comes with free refills on soda, popcorn and peanuts. It will

even get you \$1.99 off a gift shop item worth \$9.99, a free pen, stuffed animal, and even a key chain and it will get you into the games too." "Please Mom, I really want to see a performer and we might need a refill on soda. How much does it cost for two super VIP passes?" "About \$10.00 not with tax." "Could we get those please?" "Sure, that will be \$10.49." Mom handed the cashier her credit card and then the cashier handed her credit card back and said, "One moment please." The cashier got out the VIP tickets and gave them to her. "Have a nice day," Mom said. "You take care," said the cashier. "Are our seats in row three, seats ten and eleven?" asked Luke. "Up near the front row Luke," said Mom.

The announcer said, "Five minutes till the show starts." Luke and mom were talking about the new performers this year on the ad on TV. When the performance started, a man with some juggling balls came out, then two guys with dazzling swords and then more with cannons. There was a silly old clown there too who was an oddity. Some men with muskets and targets came out and then the women came out. All the men stood aside along with the women and then a big flag came out. "Have they ever done this at the other circus?" Luke whispered into mom's ear. Mom shook her head. When the flag was unfolded and everyone arose then Luke said, "It is our National Anthem." When the national anthem was done, you could hear a loud applause. It was a thrill to see the funny clown costume at the end of the show. The audience cheered with excitement. We had the best day ever.



# My Circus Life

Noah Schwartz

I emerged from my den on a pristine spring morning, glimpsing many lush, green, flourishing plants, and enjoying my supremely beautiful surroundings. Suddenly, a small burlap sack, which smelled faintly of what I would come to know as popcorn, was placed roughly over me. It seemed as if I was in the confined space forever with nothing but the occasional bump or vibration to comfort my drumming heart. Finally, I was dumped out of the bag and roughly thrown into a metal cage with freezing steel mesh all around me; not a natural thing was in sight. Little did I know that this would be the place where I spent all of my time waiting to become a performer in a never-ending circus that I wanted no part of.

Much to my dismay, I began my ruthless training for the “Greatest Show in the Galaxy” with a man, named Alexander, who smelled to me as never having showered. When the ancient performer yelled orders to me like a drill sergeant, rough stubble vibrated on his face making him look like a walking cactus. He was definitely an oddity; waltzing around with his whip like he owned an entire jungle. Over time, I learned that a sign of disrespect or failure to complete a trick would result in a vicious whipping.

As I traveled to every place imaginable in my stark, painful cage and perfected my routine, I learned that I could not change the situation I had been captured into. Worse, I was taught that I could not make choices for myself and that my future was set in stone. The cruelty of it was unbearable, and eventually, I felt as though the pressure had finally drilled a way through my mind.

The tipping point for me occurred in New York City. I recognized the city by the dazzling neon signs outside of my cracked window. The trailer continued through the glorious city until arriving at one of the biggest circuses I had ever laid eyes on. It was comprised of two smaller canopies centered around one giant colorful tent in the middle. Needless to say, I was impressed and the thrill of it overtook me. I never considered the ridiculous costume that I would be made to wear in this tent, however. It was a tight spandex suit with a small cape attached; making me look like a jester wherever I went. When I learned of this new wardrobe occurrence, frustration quickly ate away at my previous excitement. Much to my dismay, I also had to memorize an entirely new routine which meant I was continuously whipped and berated over the course of a week. After this torture, I had sores all over my torso and legs. Now I knew the reason for the costume; to hide them.

I was unwillingly squeezed into my costume on the day of the performance. My entire body burned because of the raw injuries. The day after that, I performed a grand show in front of an immense audience. I strutted out confidently in front of the gazing eyes as I began my routine. My gymnastic moves and array of skills had never been better until I attempted to land a complicated flip. Unfortunately, I landed on a fresh wound and stumbled. I glimpsed the horrific legs of my trainer, Alexander the Terrible, just as he began to whip me viciously in front of the crowd. To avoid more atrocious injuries, I was back on my feet and performed the trick again as perfectly as I could despite the searing pain. When I was finished, I climbed back into my cage, whimpering at the unfairness of my plight, but glad at least for the shelter the cold steel provided from the abuse.

That night as I was slumped against the bars trying to fall asleep, the hopeless feeling that I was forbidden to decide the direction of my life rushed over and through me. I was concerned with frustration and longing for my simple life in the jungle. I contemplated how my life could have been if I had not allowed myself to become captured all of those years ago. Most of all, I thought about my family; something I had not done for years.

In the morning, I received a huge pallet of meat at the door of my cage. Immediately, the novelty of the meal threw me off guard and alerted me that something was suspicious; I usually received a blob of gray mush in the mornings. However, I enjoyed the uncharacteristically delicious meal. I soon found out that the circus was trying to bribe me, for today’s show was supposed to become the biggest of my life. I certainly did not want to create more trouble for myself if I didn’t perform up to their expectations. Again, I strutted confidently, or as confidently as one could in a spandex jumpsuit, out onto the clean, polished wood floor where I reluctantly began my routine. This time, I stumbled on one of the first moves. Sensing something was wrong, my “master” sprinted over to me and cracked the whip over my back multiple times, shouting as he did this, that I was just a “stupid tiger.” I was enraged at the horrible disrespect I was being shown. The tight clownish costume added more to my immense embarrassment and anger.

Finally, I decided that I would not be taunted anymore and I flexed my muscles, ripping open the heinous suit with ease. I tensed my legs sending my rider plummeting into the elephants’ water trough. Just to show off, I did a flip, kicked a bucket of steaming popcorn next to the rug and

sent kernels flying into the mass of spectators. The audience cheered with excitement! I believe they interpreted this as part of the routine. Even though it was an act of rebellion, there was such positive response to it, that the circus added the popcorn stunt to the show. So now, during each of my performances, I have the opportunity to fling whoever I

want into the water and every time I do it, I receive a massive ovation from the crowd. I’ve come to believe that the applause is not only for a well performed trick, but also for turning my life around into something I enjoy and actually want to do. Now when I walk into the ring, it’s with the swagger of a true performer, not a beaten cub.

## What a Dazzling Day at the Circus!

Audra Bennett

It was a dazzling, joyful, sunny Tuesday morning. And me, my mom Lucy, and my dad Gray, were going to the circus for the day. Our home is Homes Villa, in Tennessee. “Mom, do you have the gummies?” I yelled.

“Yes, Ezra they are on the table.”

“Ok, be right down.”

One hour later, we were in our light blue van headed for the circus. “We’re here!” I cheered with glee. Lucy had brought along a costume for me to put on. “It’s a bunny!” she joyfully said. When I got out of the van I was indecisive about where to go first, but I finally figured out where to go. “Let’s go to the sword swallower first!” I suggested. “Sure.” Lucy chirped. “Why not,” chimed Gray. “Let’s go,” we all said.

When we got to the tent we wanted to go to, applause rang out through the tent. As we sat down and watched the performer. I thought what oddity, as he put the second sword in his mouth a thrill of excitement went through me. Wow, I thought how does he not choke on the sword? I pondered. “Give him a hand everybody, wasn’t that something!?” the ring master cheered. As everyone exited the tent my mom asked me. “Where do you want to go next?” Maybe the one with the tiger in the act? “Sure,” she replied. As we made our way to the tiger act we were tempted to buy the blue cotton candy. Ah, we are here! As we walked inside the performer stuck his head inside the tiger’s mouth! Everyone’s hearts seemed to stop beating, but at the same time everyone cheered. About twenty minutes later we heard a loud Boom! From outside, and everyone’s phone went off. Mom shrieked, a tornado warning! Everyone gasped as they read it. The tiger that was in the act went crazy at the sound and ran toward the huge crowd of people. Which caused the people to scatter out of the tiger’s way. As the tiger was out of the tent the ringmaster bellowed, everyone ran out of the tent and into the basement! It was like a stampede of people coming out of the tent. As me, mom, and dad raced through

the crowd I spotted the emergency basement. Over here I cried, as everyone hurried down to the basement. Once everyone was in the basement we heard a thump, thump, thump. The tornado was over them and it was gone like that. Everyone stopped crying and everything went silent. One of the girls from the crowd emerged and went up the stairs to go check and see if the storm was over just to be safe. Outside of the door was a huge tiger named Kitty that ran out of the tent when the storm started. Roar!!! Kitty growled. The girl screamed in terror. And unfortunately Kitty’s trainer went to the cellar with some of the other staff members, so we were all completely helpless.

Until, I had a great idea! I forgot I still had a piece of a chicken leg in a plastic bag from a restaurant we went to. I stepped nervously out of the shrieking crowd. Here Kitty, Kitty I said cautiously. Grrrr! Kitty growled. “Ezra!” Lucy shouted. I was trying to persuade Kitty to go back up the stairs and out of the cellar. But instead I heard a shouting from Kitty’s trainer.

“Kitty!” bellowed Kitty’s trainer Ruby. Kitty delightfully raced after Ruby and started to lick her. Ruby giggled, “Stop it Kitty that tickles!” Everyone laughed and came out of the cellar. Two hours later, “Yippee!” I shouted. “That ride was awesome!” I giggled. “Let’s go on that one!” “You can go on that ride with your father,” Lucy gasped. Gray chuckled, “You’re tired already?” We all giggled, “Let’s go pumpkin!” That’s what my dad calls me for my nickname, a lot. “Next up is the power!” I said. “Nice one!” dad said with enthusiasm. As we were starting to make our way over there, we heard a police car roaring up the dirty, messy, dirt path. As the police made their way up the dirt path towards us a loud crack came from the cart we were in. And then, boom! We fell, and everything went black. But I heard faint screams from my mom Lucy, and loud yells from my dad Gray a little distance away. Next thing I knew I heard rushing water from a stream.



I awoke startled and my hands and feet hurt from some ropes that were tied around them. As I struggled to get the knot undone, I heard an aggravated noise from what sounded like a bull. About three minutes later I finally got the knots undone and went over to where I had heard the sounds coming from. Right in front of my eyes I saw a pack of wolves circling a large, red, nose. Once I cautiously go over to a weird shaped hedge over at the wolves, they stopped circling him and ran away, and so did the bull. I guess I must have looked very scary. Well now what do I do, I thought to myself. Well I guess I will just follow the river downstream. I had always been told that if you follow a river downstream, you will always find a town and hopefully it will get me back to my parents. Thirty minutes later, I saw a faint outline of a town. As I raced to the town, I thought maybe my parents will be around here, somewhere. I started looking in all the buildings, as I passed by them. Most of them appeared to have been empty for a long time. I could hear some noise coming from the end of the street and so headed in that

## A Day at the Circus

Luke Velbis

It was a brilliant, Sunday morning and I was really delighted because I was going to be leaving to go to the circus with my dad. It took my dad an excessively long time to wake up and get out of bed. So when my dad finally got out of bed we cooked ourselves some breakfast of eggs, two pieces of bacon, a piece of toast and some orange juice, which was lip smacking good. We went to the garage and dad unlocked the yellow Lamborghini, which he won.

When we got there, there was an extensive line of cars. So we had to investigate for a parking spot. We finally located one and we parked the Lamborghini and shuffled over to the ticket booth.

The man there grumbly asked us for our tickets. So we gave the tickets to him and he let us in. I witnessed a loud applause and I saw dazzling sights. We went into a huge tent and we found a place to sit. Just then a man in a black tuxedo came through a curtain. He said that the show would start extremely quickly and it did. There were performers and clowns in big costumes. The show was a thrill to watch, they had lots of oddity suits and costumes. Then they said that the show was over and everyone gave a loud applause. So dad and I got to meet a famous performer. It was so cool and loud. After we got something to eat we continued to march

direction. As I neared the end of the street, I could see a bunch of people standing around and looking very unhappy. I walked up and asked, what's going on, why is everyone unhappy. As they turned to look at me, they all gave a great shout of joy. They had been looking for me and were sad because they could not find me. My mom and dad gave me a big hug and said they were so glad I was back safe. What a story I had to tell all my friends at school the next day.

What a day I wearily whispered as I slumped my backpack on the polished, brown, oak chair. "Come on honey!" Mom chimed. "Where are we going?" I pondered. We're going to the circus!!" "What!?" I yelped. I nearly jumped out of my skin when I heard the word circus in the sentence. As my mom reassured me that it was going to be all right. I climbed in the blue, new van. When we got there I want to go to the fire rings! I cheered. As we entered a dim facility, all I saw was flaming rings of fire, as the audience cheered with excitement!

around the whole circus. It was extremely fun and we had a blast. The circus was extended twenty-four seven, so we lingered there all day. We searched around some more for things to do until it was shadowy outside. Dad and I went to plop down when we started to relax, we dozed off to sleep. We were then awakened by screaming and yelling.

Dad was the first person to wake up so he woke me up. We surveyed around the circus for something to eat. We found a place to eat breakfast, after we ate breakfast we observed the circus again. They had firework shows to see who had the biggest and coolest firework. A man named Bob won first place. His firework show was so cool and it had so many blasting colors.

After the firework show they had to close the circus down because one of the fireworks got a tent to catch on fire. So they called the firefighters and they phoned the police and phoned the ambulance to make sure no one got agonized. They all came in a flash and the firefighters put out the fire. The fire burned down the tent which caught the grass on fire which also caught the rides on fire which was bad. So they had a lot of damage and it was going to cost a lot of money to fix it. So they said that no one will be able to go to the circus again until they fixed all the damage. So

dad and I went back home and at the house we took a nap. Then we went back to the circus to see if they fixed any of the damage. They fixed some of the damage but they didn't fix all of it. So we went back to the hotel and then turned on the TV. The news was on and they were talking about the circus damage. They said that the fire didn't start by accident it started on purpose. They said that someone set the fire and then they left. They got in a black car and police officers said that they did catch the license plate number. It was A4903-B2 the police said that the car was owned by the gangster's boss and that he said that they could borrow it. So they brought it back to the secret base and they had police search for fingerprints. They found a few fingerprints and they were to a gangster named Secret Rodent. That was his code name and they found another fingerprint to another gangster named Flap Jack. They found that the person was going to light the firework and they couldn't. So they went to the back of the tent to see if they could get something to light it. Meanwhile, the gangsters had the correct lighter and they lit it on fire but a spark jumped out of the lighter and landed on the tent which made the whole thing burn to the ground. They found the lighter on the ground near the burnt down tent. They figured out all of the clues or most of them and they caught the gangsters Flap Jack and Secret Rodent trying to steal a bag full of money. So the police brought them to jail and they had to go to court and answer the questions that they asked them. They said that they burned the tent down to make the circus go down on purpose.

They also said that if they burned down the circus tent they would get paid millions of dollars. The police found

the secret base of the gangsters and they searched the place and they found the boss and they arrested him and put him in jail. He said that he was working for another person. So they fixed all of the problems and they finally opened the circus again. Dad and I went back to the circus and we went to go see another show. When we were in the show and were watching the show, we saw all of these security guards stationed all around the circus.

Then after we watched the show it was time for lunch. We went around the whole circus looking for food to eat and then we came upon Flap Jack's Burgers and Fries. So we went there and ate, the meal was really good but the eggs were really greasy. We then went back to the hotel because dad forgot his phone. When we got there we went inside and to go get it. When we got to the hotel room we tried to get in and we couldn't. Dad and I marched over to the front desk to tell them that our key wouldn't get us in the room. The guy helped us get into our room and he said that our room key was due so dad had to pay again. They said that it didn't happen often but they said that we would get the first time that we had to pay for the key, we would get the money back. When we drove back to the circus there were people inside that were taking everything down and we asked why they were taking everything down. They said that they were closed and that the circus won't be open. We saw all the cars still there and we heard voices. So we followed the voices and they led to everyone in a big circle and the owner of the circus. He said a few things and then the audience cheered with excitement!



# Under the Big Top

Collin Velbis

It was a marvelous day under the big top as people poured into the dazzling arena. I, Duane, was among the swarms of people waiting impatiently to be granted access to the enormous red, white, and gold tent that perched on the ground, rising up to the clouds. Finally, my family and I were at the front of the line, where we were met by a pudgy man with a football helmet on, a baseball bat in his hand, and a hockey jersey on that was too small for him. "Welcome to the sports circus, how can I help you?" he glowered impatiently. "Tickets for four please," my dad anxiously said. With an exchange of money for tickets, he quickly waved us inside.

As we entered through the big flaps I gawked at everything I saw at every turn. To my left were brilliant framed photos of NFL players in the hall of fame. And to my right, mantled on a screen, was a soccer documentary, which many were viewing. As I looked around everything and everyone was in costume as their favorite player or sport. I saw Bronco, Cardinals, Raiders, and Charger jerseys, along with people dressed up as their favorite soccer player, hockey player, and basketball player. I personally, had an Arizona Cardinals Carson Palmer jersey on. As we walked around everywhere, seeing everything, a big voice boomed over the overhead intercom, "Welcome to the sports circus where every sports fan from around the world has gathered here to watch a spectacular performance of awesomeness. If you will find your way to your seat the show will begin in just a moment. Thank you!"

"Well, that's our cue," dad said with a wink. We walked around looking for the flap that said "to arena." But, as we wandered around, hoping not to run into another grumpy employee, we stumbled upon a concession stand. "How about grabbing some grub before the show?" Mom chirped. We all put our heads together and decided to get something and take it into the circus arena. A few minutes later, we finally found the big flap that read, "arena." With food in hand, and drinks tucked under our arm we pushed our way through. When we got through the huge, red, flaps we were blinded by the lights, and deafened by the thundering applause as we had just missed Antonio Brown juggling 40 footballs on a tight rope, with spikes below him. Finally, we found our seat, let the show begin!

The next stunt that occurred was Leonardo Messi dribbling a soccer ball through a flaming ring as the crowd oohed their excitement. After Messi finished and bowed, out trotted Alex Rodriguez with three dozen baseball bats tucked under his arm. Without a word, Rodriguez hopped onto a unicycle, and to the amazement of everyone, started juggling all thirty- six baseball bats! The thrill of the act was

overwhelming as we all stood up and gave him a standing ovation. After he had bowed, he collected his things and retreated back to the back room. The next performer who appeared was Simone Biles who to the amazement of everyone, stuck herself into a cannon, and in the blink of an eye lit it! The crowd fell silent as we all watched almost in slow motion, Biles explode from the cannon launch into the air, do approximately thirty-four flips, twists, summersaults, corkscrews and from there landed on a tight rope! The crowd erupted in applause, hooting, and hollering as she smiled, bowed, and went into the back. Out of all the performances I saw that night, that one was a true oddity!

After a couple more acts, which included trapeze by Aly Riesman, fire breathing by "The Rock," and clowns who I was pretty sure were Eli and Peyton Manning. They were both in their own ridiculous costume and both riding on the same unicycle! Then, the one I considered the best came up next! But, before it happened, a voice on the overhead intercom boomed, "Attention people, we regret to inform you that this is the last act of the day. I hope you enjoyed the sports circus, and come back to visit us soon. Have a great day, and we hope you are pleasantly surprised at this next act!" With that, he clicked off and the crowd fell silent in anticipation of what we were about to see. After a little bit of nothing happening, I began to wonder if something had gone wrong again. But, finally I saw a figure emerge from the shadows of the stage. It was hard to tell who it was but finally to my amazement, I was able to make out Derek Jeter! He boomed into a microphone, "Hello people, today for the final act of the sports circus, I will be riding a unicycle in a hula-hoop on a tight rope through a ring of fire twenty feet above the ground, juggling bowling pins on fire with one hand, swallowing daggers with the other all while blindfolded! With those words the crowd erupted into cheers, and hollering anticipating the feat of utter skill that was about to unfold before our very own eyes! So, without another word Jeter stepped onto the unicycle, which he skillfully rode into a hula-hoop. Then he blindfolded himself, grabbed his pins and daggers, set them on fire and rode his unicycle onto the tightrope. I stood gawking in total amazement as he perfectly executed everything! It was amazing, the crowd was cheering and he looked as calm as ever. Suddenly, he took one wrong push of his peddles, and before anyone knew anything he was tumbling off the tightrope toward the thin mat twenty feet below him!

Everyone gasped as he hit the mat hard and howled in pain! From there it was total pandemonium! People were gasping, shouting, pointing, crying, I even heard someone

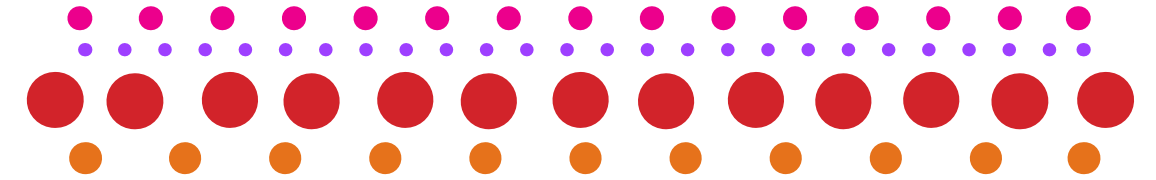


yell "call 911!" He lay there motionless as EMTs burst into the arena with a stretcher and loaded him on! With that, they took him away as we all sat there in shock. Hours went by and no one knew what was happening to poor Jeter, and we all wanted to hang around to find out. Suddenly, as if on cue Jeter popped into the arena! He explained that he had

a small concussion, bruises, and scrapes but that he was in good enough condition to finish the act! The audience cheered with excitement as he completed the act concussion free! My family and I walked away that night knowing we had just seen the best circus ever!

## Circus Fun

Sofia Kamal



I waited in line for the ticket master to confirm my ticket so that I could finally get into the circus. I made sure that I had the best seats in the house. It was the first time that I had been to the circus. I was nervous because if the performer make one mistake; they could be fatally injured. As I sat down, the thrill of being here was enough to loosen my concerns. The show was about to start. There was a blast of cheery circus music that uplifted everyone's mood instantly. Everything went dark and a single spotlight flickered on.

"Bring out the acrobats!" the ringmaster boomed.

In a single file line, the acrobats marched out, their costume purple leotards. In unison, they did back handsprings and cartwheels. The lead acrobat waved left, and the acrobats on the left side went into an X formation. The lead acrobat waved right, and they also went into similar formation. The lead acrobat did two back handsprings and then a back tuck. The crowd went wild, but the acrobats weren't done yet. The acrobats started climbing over one another. There were three on the bottom and then put one hand above their heads, except for the middle one who put up both hands. Then two more climbed and stuck one hand up, and the last one climbed on top. The crowd screamed so loud that everyone within a mile radius could hear.

"Give a round of applause for the acrobats!" the ringmaster boomed which was indeed unnecessary because the crowd was as loud as it could get. "Now, it's time to welcome the tightrope walker!"

The spotlight was on the tightrope walker performer. She did a few practice walks across it, and everyone held their breath because one misstep could cause a serious injury. The tightrope walker ran across the rope and did a front tuck on the end. This time, she did a cartwheel and a back walkover, as well as a front walkover. I heard a little girl whisper to her mother in wonder, "How do they do it?"

I decided to take a break, so I went to the concession stands to get some more popcorn, peanuts, and cotton candy. By the time I returned to my seat, the tightrope walker had finished her act, and a comedy skit was going on. It consisted of wooden puppets and roars of laughter.

Next up was one of my personal favorites ... the magic show. Although it was the typical trick of sawing someone in half, it was still a blast to watch. The magician, behind his mustache, inspected the crowd, as though he was making a life threatening decision. Finally, he chose a young boy, in the very back row. Trembling, the boy stumbled forward.

"I shall saw this boy in half!" the magician cried.

The magician cut through a block of wood to demonstrate how sharp it was. This got everyone's attention and put us all on the very edge of our seats. Shivering, the boy laid down in the box and the magician slammed the lid shut, jolting everyone in the room. He started sawing the box and boy and the crowd's eyes widened as the boy yelled in pain. Everyone expected to see blood.

Instead, there was candy! The boy's feet were successfully detached from his body and he got out of the box in a daze. The magician was rewarded with a round of applause.

The juggler was simply an oddity. He was able to juggle five Rubik's cubes at once. This may not seem impressive but as he was juggling them, he was also solving them. It took a while, but it was very impressive, nonetheless.

It was time for the fire eaters to make their appearance. The four of them dressed in black and they all breathed fire in many patterns, and they were so coordinated that they even made smoke from the fire turn into designs. One was a heart and another was an elephant. The crowd watched in fascination as these talented people took our breath away.

There was another comedy skit, this time it consisted of two people, and they were arguing over a topic anyone from the audience threw out. Many people laughed with glee because it didn't matter what the topic was, they could argue over water if it was thrown out. Everyone wondered whether the duo simply weren't compatible or if a lot of training had been done. Altogether, they were ridiculously entertaining.

They gave us a fifteen-minute break to go to the bathroom or get a refill at the concession stand because they had kept us for quite a while. I noticed many people saying they were quite impressed with the quality of work of the circus acts.

There were two tightrope walkers, this time, and many people wondered why they were brought out again. But instead of doing tricks, they started doing the salsa. The man was so strong that he even made his partner look like she's floating in air when they turn and spin. Everyone's heart blossomed at the spectacular sight.

The man in the rocket was next and everyone was watching. The man wore a helmet and got in a cannon. His assistant lit the flame. The string was getting shorter and shorter. Boom! Everyone almost got knocked out of their seats. On the other side of the room, everyone wondered what the fate of the

man was. He got up and walked to the center of the stage, unharmed but dazed. The crowd cheered for his safety.

Finally, the trapeze lady had a net set up under them so that she wouldn't be hurt if she fell.

Gracefully, she swung from rope to rope. She was so dazzling and was so composed. The audience was simply dazzled by her skill.

Finally, the ringmaster said, "Well folks that's our show." The audience cheered with excitement and left with smiles on their faces.

## My Amazing Day at the Circus

Kristen Williams

I wake up early in the morning, I am ready to go to the circus for the first time ever! I quickly eat my blueberry pancakes and headed out the door. I have been waiting for this day for what it feels like forever. I can't wait, my whole life span of 10 years, I have dreamed about going to the circus. I invited three friends to enjoy this unforgettable experience with me. I invited my friends Carol, Savannah, and Mackenzie. My mom drove 10 minutes to get to the circus. We arrived around 30 minutes early to the circus, my dream was finally coming to reality. I waited outside of the circus for my friends to come, soon after they finally came.

We all let out a loud squeal among the four of us, then I stepped into the circus building. I could finally face my dream that has been living with me my whole life. We went inside and we were packed like sardines. There were tons of people squirming around us. My mom finally navigated her way to the concession stand. There were so many options but the four of us got the same exact thing. We all ordered a buttery soft pretzel and a medium Sprite. After we ordered, we sat down at a table. Quickly, we munched on our pretzel and slurped down our Sprite. My mom stated we had one last stop, before we sat down for the circus. My mom brought us to the merchandise table. At the merchandise table, it was extremely packed, but I didn't even care because they had a huge selection of colorful shirts. They probably had at least 10 different types of shirts not including sweatshirts or tank tops. My friends and I all decided on one shirt, after it felt like hours fighting over which shirt to get. The shirts we got had purple stripes going down them and plastered on the front it stated Colorado circus of amazing tricks and dazzling performances. Each of us got a t-shirt and were officially ready for the show.

We looked down at our tickets, then started to walk up to our seats. Our seats of course were on the top level, we walked up what it felt like a million stairs. In the end, it was

all worth it because I was living out my dream of going to the circus. As we got to our seats, I just gave a moment to be thankful of where I am at. The circus was ginormous, colorful, and met my expectations in my head of what it would look like. The circus was full of things, like animals, people with lots of face paint covered in sequins. When I started to look around, I saw that today was a water themed circus show. I asked my mom and she told me that this was my last surprise to my circus trip. This meant that there would be dolphins, seals, and maybe even stingrays. On our ticket, there was code. On the billboard that was across from me, it stated that they will call out one lucky winner who will get to participate in a huge surprise during the show. About now, it is 10 minutes until the show starts. My ticket had the code, "circus 1359" on it. About five minutes before the show, the lady announced that she would call out one lucky winner to the stage. The lady got everybody's attention, at this point I had butterflies fluttering throughout my stomach. The lady said, "The winner is the person with the code of circus 1359." My heart dropped and all I could hear is the applause throughout the crowd.

"Mom, that's me!" I screamed. My mother had this blank look on her face, like she couldn't process what was happening. I just felt this thrill scattered across my body. I quickly got out of my seat and started to head up to the stage. Obviously whoever wins, gets to come up to the stage and I oddity came up to the stage because everyone was looking at me.

"What's your name?" stated the nice lady. "Chloe," I screeched to the microphone.

"Well, congrats Chloe you have an amazing prize to look forward to."

This lady came up behind me and told me to begin following her. Backstage, was nothing I could've ever imagined. There were sparkling and dazzling costumes

everywhere. There was a makeup artist everywhere you turned. I kept following the lady, along the way I met many of the cast members and they were divine. Each one of them, told me not be nervous and that I will do great up there. Finally, the lady in front of me said this is our stop. I looked up and saw the most beautiful thing ever. It was a slick black wet suit that basically looked like it was designed for me, it was my costume. I knew this because it had dazzling pink diamonds everywhere. I went into the dressing room and got changed. When I was in the room, all I could see was the wet suit hung from a tiny gold hook. I finally got into the wetsuit and I was ready to go out the door. The people gave me two black flippers, but they still have not told me what we are doing yet. Then a lady came up to me, and told me I would be a performer with dolphins. She said not to worry because I would be supervised the whole time, by an experienced dolphin trainer. They grabbed my shoulder and stood me right next to the black velvet curtain. Five minutes you better

be ready they said. After the five minutes, I pranced out like they told me to, then I faced this huge pool filled with dolphins. I was in costume and ready to go, in the back of my mind I could hear the audience give me a huge applause. The trainer told me to step onto the little white stairs in the pool. I did so, and of course I had a life vest on, in case anything tragic happened to me. I finally got in the water which was not too cold, it was just right. I looked down and all I could see were dolphins swimming under me. The trainer got into the pool and let out a loud whistle. A dolphin came straight to the whistle without a blink. The audience cheered with excitement. The trainer grabbed onto my waist and put me on the dolphin. The dolphin started to ride around and do crazy jumps and flips. This is when I heard a beep in the back of my mind. My eyes opened and it was six in the morning, also known as the time to get ready for school. Even though, that was just a dream, that magnificent experience will live with me forever.

## Revolution at the Circus

Sierra Adams

"Come on Emre, it's almost time to go!" My mom calls from down the hall. She made plans to take my little sister and me to the circus that comes around once a year. She says that a famous performer will put on acts with exotic animals from all over the world. My sister, Lily, is really excited. But me, not so much, I don't really support caging animals.

I crawl out of bed with a stretch. I sleepily make my way to the kitchen to fix a bowl of cereal. Lily was already sitting at the table, dressed with a smile on her face. The look on her face shows her happiness.

After I eat, I run back up to my room to slide on some jeans and a sweater. As I walk out of the house and to the car, the chill of autumn air hits my face. Turning my cheeks a soft shade of pink as I walk over the orange and brown leaves that now lay on the ground. The circus isn't far from our house. As I get out of the car I look at my mom "Why are we here?" I ask.

"For a good time," she answers. "Look E, I know this really isn't your thing but please try to have fun. If not for me, for your sister," As my mom finishes her statement Lily looks up to smile at me.

I just nod. I look at the entrance sign that reads: "Come one, Come all to this extraordinary affair! Allow yourself a day of fun and excitement while placing your eyes on such wonders, learning something new with each oddity!" I find myself uncontrollably rolling my eyes. As soon as we walk in Lily starts to jump up and down gawking at every little thing she sees. In her six-year-old mind, this is a new world

of sorts, maybe even a wonderland to her. "Look E!" She smiles widely pointing at a man with a monkey resting on his shoulders. He is wearing an over exaggerated outfit and a top hat, his body weight is supported by a cane.

"Good day Sir," His fake Australian accent making me cringe. I wonder if he uses that to seem like an adventurer or if he just thinks it makes him look cool. Either way, I force myself to smile as I walk past him, tilting my head in response.

Automatically I see animals. I wonder if they are treated properly. If they are fed like they should be. If they are happy. But for some reason I can't help but assume that they are suffering. You always read stories on the news about circuses around the world being shut down because they can't care for their animals. Even if there is something going on, I wouldn't be able to do anything about it. I look at my feet as we walk, every single step creating a new cloud of dust to live around my ankles for just a split second. My mom leads Lily and me to the biggest tent, where the show will go on.

She looks at Lily as we walk through the opened doors, "Isn't it just Dazzling!?" She says with a huge smile on her face.

"It's amazing!" Lily answers.

My mom always taught me that if I didn't have anything nice to say, then I shouldn't say anything at all. I remember



how my mom told me to not ruin this for Lily, I understand. So with that, I walk out of the tent, maybe roaming around for a bit before the show starts will make me feel better about the situation I'm in. But then, a crazy idea runs through my mind. What if I was brought here today to do something bigger?

I walk to where they keep the caged animals, maybe just seeing them will show me that they are happy, that they are cared for. I pass a costume hanging on a rack. I feel a thrill run through my body as I approach a cage with a bird in it. I jump at the sound of applause coming from a nearby tent. The small bird looks unhealthy and unhappy. I smile at him as I look at all the other animals. They have anything you could think of, from pigs to elephants. Many unhappy animals in one area.

My heart pounds in my chest as I walk over to a lion's cage, "It's okay buddy," I say softly. I just hope he knows I will never hurt him, because if he gets scared, I could quickly be injured or killed. Suddenly, I'm moving through the rows of cages like I was taking a tour of the place.

I have no idea what made me think any of this was a good idea, or what made me feel the need to do it but I walk back over to the bird cage and open it. At first she stays in place,

## Journey to Everland

### Angela Trujillo

The day was coming to an end, and the sky began to darken. My mind felt like it had been fried from all of my studying and homework. I groaned and fell onto my bed, landing on Bosco my dog. "Sorry Bosco," as I rubbed his back, "I think it's time for bed." He wagged his tail and covered himself under my blankets. "Good night." I closed my eyes to escape this harsh reality and slowly drifted to sleep. As I slept, I heard someone calling out to me in an endless voice. "Aria," someone kept calling out. "Come, come to us." I hesitantly followed the voice to a tear in the blackness. The tear was filled with light and wonderful sounds. I heard the voice again, "Aria." I went to look through the hole when I felt this thrill rush through my body causing me to fall into the cavity. I watched the ground get closer and closer to me and before I hit it, my body levitated for a second and fell.

I got up and peered around, seeing that I was somewhere; somewhere that I had seen before. Maybe once as a child or in another lifetime. A gate appeared and above it hung a massive, "Welcome to Everland" sign. Behind the gate there were carnival rides, booths, people, and a huge tent; that covered most of the park. The tent read, "Grandale Everland Circus" and was surrounded by thousands of people waiting to get inside.

not willing to move, "C'mon beautiful," I hold my hand out for her, with that she jumps in my hand and flies away. All of the sudden I find myself opening every cage in sight, lions, tigers, monkeys, birds, goats now roaming free. And realizing what I've done way too late to fix the problem I run back to my mom to see the show.

As I sit down I hear a scream. Someone probably just had an encounter with a now free animal. "Emre, did you do something?" My mom whispers in my ear and I shake my head no. The truth is I did do something, But I'm not going to tell her that.

Suddenly, a herd of animals, all shapes and sizes runs through the curtains. I giggle to myself and Lily starts to clap and laugh, they think it's part of the act. But of course due to the problems, they close the curtain. An amazing act brought to you by Emre I thought to myself, as the bright colorful lights dimmed. And the audience cheered with excitement.



I walked closer to the gate and heard the cheers and applause echo from the tent, "Hello Aria." I looked down and saw that the gate had spoken to me. I stepped back shocked, "A talking gate..." I can feel the emptiness on my face. "This is your imagination running Angela. You see everything that you have imagined once in your life." The doors opened, splitting them in half. "Explore your imagination." I slowly entered through the gate and caught the sights of all the laughter, rides, booths, and I looked at the tent with awe. I felt drawn to it in a way, so I made my way to it. A girl, oddly dressed welcomed me as I approached the tent. "Hello Aria. I'm Cat Corban. In here you will see everything that you dream of; anything you can dream of." She smiled, "So if I want to see a flying two-headed cat, I could?" She laughed at the oddity of my words, not knowing I was serious.

She kindly opened the tent entrance and allowed me to step in. "Now introducing, Barron Butler with his famous Flying Angels." The performer stepped out to the middle of the crowd, "Now ladies and gents, allow me to introduce my angels." He stepped to the side, allowing them to come out. They dressed in white dresses, with tights, and ballerina shoes. "Here we have Katerina, Zara, Yasmine, Suri and Raine. My angels." A huge poof of smoke and a bright light appeared, and disappeared leaving the girls high above the

audience. Wings suddenly appeared on them as they dove off the bar they were standing on; and hooked themselves to huge rings.

They swung around each other, flipping and twirling. The music stopped and they floated down as if they were Angels. Butler and his angels took a bow, "Thank you ladies; and now Ladies and Gents. I hear we have someone special in the audience today." The crowd roared. "...Please welcome Aria." The crowd grew louder. A bright stage light landed on me and I got pushed forward starting my walk. I made my way to Butler and he wrapped his arm around me, "We've waited all these years for Aria; to make this huge show for her. Now what do you say we show her what we can do!"

He yelled to the audience. They screamed and cheered, "Well let's show her what we can do." He walked with me to the front row and sat with me. "Now introducing Otto the Bosco trainer." I saw Otto appear with a leash and treats for Bosco. Bosco came out to the stage; Otto circled around him and he lifted up his hands, causing him to spread his wings wide and flap. It was strange to see a dog with wings... I thought to myself. He flew up slightly into the air and did a backflip. He came back to the ground and Otto nodded at him, "Tell her Bosco." He spoke out. Bosco opened his mouth and flames exit his mouth forming words. "We love you." I smiled and cheered. They left the stage and Butler pulled me up with him.

"When we come back, Angela will be in this next act with us." I looked at him confused and the crowd cheered. He took my hand and walked me to the dressing room. He handed me a costume and looked at me. "You can do anything because this is your imagination, and your freedom to explore." He left me in my dressing room. This costume was dazzling and matched the others.

After a long time of thinking, Butler came in, "You know Angela, you don't always need a plan. You can simply

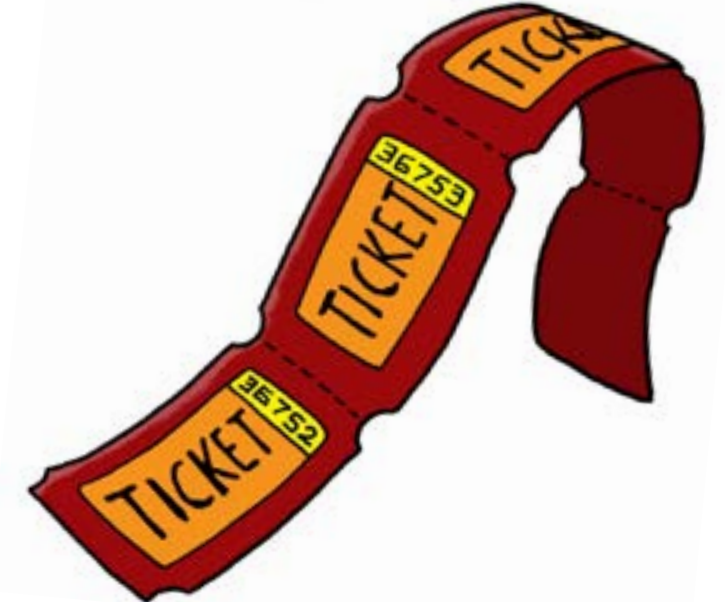
just trust yourself in what you think is right, instead of overthinking everything." He reached for my hand and I took it. We walked out onto the stage and my heart began to race, I can't believe that I was actually going to do this. How could I do this? Ok, I can't keep overthinking this. I kept talking to myself as I made my way to the others.

"Just stop thinking and let your mind wander." Katerina whispered to me. I smiled and took a deep breath. You can do this, I repeated to myself. Katerina jumped up to the metal bar and reached for my hand. I grabbed it and she pulled me up; leaving me standing alone there.

"Today ladies and gents, you will see something that has never been done before. Angela will jump from this bar into this small tub without a scratch." He looked at me with pride.

I maintained my breath as the rest of the girls jumped, and flew around me. I walked to the end of the bar and peered down; seeing the small tub thousands of feet down. My heart raced as the drums began to make big booming sounds. The beat of the drums got faster and faster.

Then they finally stopped and it went silent. I got closer to the edge and closed my eyes; finally pushing myself to jump. Air flushed my face and the audience was still silent. I landed into what felt like a cloud. I opened my eyes and stood up seeing I had landed in the small tub. The audience cheered with excitement. "I told you that you could do it." Butler helped me out of the tub and we took a bow. "It's time Angela. You've learned something here that you can never forget." I hugged him and walked towards the exit. I suddenly woke up in my bed and smiled.



# The Best Day Ever

Dakota Lucero

It's 8 a.m. and I can't wait for today! I bought these tickets months ago, knowing my nephew would be just as excited as I am. Front row seats to the Dazzling Denver circus right here at the Colorado State Fair Grounds. I slept over at my sister's house because I wanted to spend the whole day with baby Frank so as I wait for him to get up, I get ready for the day and I make breakfast for him and his parents. I help my nephew into his overalls and slip on some comfy shoes. We've both never been to one, so I hope it's as much of a thrill as everyone makes it seem! I help him off of my sister's bed and she hands me his bag. I pack baby Frank into his car seat and we're off.

"Have a fun time!" she yells as we back out of her driveway.

"Be safe!" her husband shouts, following her comment.

Because we still have little time to waste we run to the store and stock his bag up with snack for the show. Cheerios (his favorite), Bug juice and a big water bottle for both of us.

Hopping back in the car we're now headed for the big event. Without taking a breath, he sings along to every song on the radio until I have to shut off the car. We approach the big striped tent and we can hear the elephants in the back getting ready for show time and the seats are starting to fill. We grab two seats, front row and munch on Cheerios while we wait for the show to begin.

He's done stuffing his sticky face with cereal so I quickly grab a wet wipe, wipe his face and tiny hands, and put it in his bag and the lights dim down. A couple moments pass and a spotlight is directed towards a curtain as a tall man in a hat like Abraham Lincoln comes out on an elephant and my nephew's face lights up with excitement. The man introducing himself as each actor comes out, then announcing their roles and names. There are acrobats, tightrope walkers, tamed animals, clowns, actors in stilts, and unicyclists. We can't wait!

"We are the Dazzling Denver Circus!" they all yell as the crowd starts to applaud.

"Look at the clowns juggling the bowling pins," I say as I point Frank's attention in their direction. Huge tigers are proudly showing off their stripes, posing in every corner of the ring. Meanwhile big hula hoop like rings are brought out and lit to flames. The tigers stride to their spots, sprint in the direction of the fiery hoops, jump through the death traps and my nephew's eyes are almost as big as the fiery rings.

"That was so cool!" Frank yells at the top of his lungs, jumping out of his front row seat.

Flexible women are shoved in boxes and elephants are standing on two feet and Frank can't stop talking about how he wants to ride one too like the clowns.

"Can I ride it too?" he asks while yanking on my jacket.

"We'll see Frank," I reply.



Acrobats are walking the tight rope, flipping around, jumping on the tiny string. Each wearing a sequined fitted costume and little lacey ballet shoes. Tina the tightrope walker and Helen Heights cross the rope and bow at the podium and we notice Valerie Vertigo's lace from her shoe is no longer intact. But still going on with the performance she makes her way to the middle as the tigers still performing roar and show off their masculinity. She steps on the loose lace and her eyes almost pop out of her head in fright. Wobbling back and forth the whole crowd is so quiet we can hear her heart nearly jump out of her chest. Frank jumps in my lap and we're both chewing on our fingernails. Weighing side to side she's kneeling down trying to regain steadiness on the fish line like rope. Even the tigers have stopped mid jump to recognize Valerie's life flashing before her eyes. Within this time 10 backstage members lug a trampoline from the curtain nearby under her trembling body. We can all tell the performer is ready to give up.

Frank yells, "she's about to fall!" and at that moment, with sweat dripping down her forehead and tears filling her big brown eyes, her foot slips and her petite body plummets to earth. I have one hand over my nephew's eyes and one over mine, peeping through my two trembling fingers. And he keeps asking, "Auntie what's going on?" I'm too stunned to reply.

I remove my hands from our eyes and at this point Vertigo Valerie hits the surface and the whole crowd's jaws drop in awe, the goosebumps on the back of our necks grow as we're holding our breath and she then bounces back up. Doing three front flips and sticking the landing on the tight rope. Starting to applaud, the crowd goes wild.

She hits the surface and the whole crowd's jaws drop in awe. By this time I've taken my hand off his face and he takes in a big breath. She then bounces back up, doing 3 front flips and lands back on the tight rope. And we all start to applaud. Frank then says, "That was so close Auntie!" as he's jumping up and down rooting for her as she does one more flip, landing on the podium.

"Yes that was!" I reply just as excited as him.

"I want to do that too!" he says enthusiastically.

"When you get older you can do anything you want," I reply.

The audience cheering with excitement still, we finish our standing ovation and it's time to go home. My nephew and I really did have an amazing day at the Circus. I'm glad we both got to experience something we've both never been to, together. We both can't wait until The Dazzling Denver Circus is back in town!

# Tesla

Piper Murphy

It was the first time I had ever been to the circus, I had always seen commercials for Barnum Bailey's circus bizarre but never had the money to actually go. This year I had saved my babysitting money for two weeks so that I could finally get a ticket. I couldn't believe I was actually there, a thrill overtook my body as I entered the golden gates. A performer came up to me right as I got through the door she was wearing bright iridescent pants and a hat that had a sharp point at the top. She asked if I was ready to go and without giving me time to answer took me by the arm and rushed me up the stairs I tried explaining that I was not a performer but she insisted I get into costume before the show started. A man who must have been seven feet tall handed me a dazzling pink dress with sharp shoulder pads and a pair of contacts that made my eyes appear purple. He told me to follow the other girls out to the stage and then handed me a giant stick with cotton encasing the top. It looked like a giant Q-tip and before I knew it the tall man had it lit aflame and gave me a push on to the stage. The other girls twirled and spun their fire wands as I stumbled and tried to keep up. I had no idea what I had gotten myself into. I decided it would be in my best interest to get out of there before I caught myself on fire, but right as I turned around a barred metal door closed the only exit. As I poorly executed the dance routine people started to stare at me. Not wanting their gaze I moved my way to the back of the dancers when suddenly the barred door opened and two male tigers fearlessly walked across the room. I slid in through the gap of the door carefully avoiding the giant cats. When I was finally off the stage I found myself lost in an abundance of props. Old clown cars, pinball machines, stilts, and of course more glittering costumes. I could hear the applause from backstage and knew they would be coming back any second. Panicking I ran up a set of stairs that twisted and turned about 40 feet up. When I finally reached the top all I could see was a soft blue light shining from the crack of the door. I slowly pushed it open to see a giant fish tank with one small decoration. The door shut abruptly behind me and I stared in awe as a woman with pastel green hair and bright blue eyes emerged from the water and smiled at me. She had extremely sharp teeth and a long mermaid like tail but she was no mermaid. Her nose and ears had a protective layer of skin over them so that water would not enter. She looked like she was scared, concerned about something but it wasn't herself. She pointed to the corner and then quickly hid behind the single decoration in the tank. I heard loud footsteps approaching the door so I hid in the direction she had pointed and waited for my fate. As I tried to steady my

breath like a schoolgirl playing hide and seek I saw two large men in brightly outrageous suits open a cupboard and take out a sharp metal rod. They looked at the girl with green hair and said, "We heard something of oddity, do you want to tell us what's going on?" She shook her head stubbornly and went to hide again. One of the men began to climb up the red ladder that was attached to the side of the tank. He said again in a more aggressive tone "Do you want to tell me what's going on?" The girl completely ignored him and began swimming around the aquarium. The man opened the top of the tank and flipped a switch on the metal rod and stuck it into the water. When the metal made contact with the water it immediately began sending volts of electrical current into the tank. I watched as the girl seized and cried. She finally cried out, "Stop, I'll tell you!" in a muffled underwater tone. I scooted closer into the corner because I figured she would rat me out. But instead she explained that the footsteps they had heard had actually been her practicing Morse code on the glass. Slightly convinced the men closed the tank, shut the door and began to go down the stairs. Immediately after they had closed the door I popped up and began constructing a plan. I knew I had to get her out of there. I asked her what her name was and she told me no one had ever given her one. I explained how most people go by something so that people can identify them from others. I told her that I thought Tesla would be a nice name, she agreed and we began trying to figure out an escape route. I looked around the room to see if there was anything I could transfer Tesla in. It was difficult because she can't be out of water for more than three minutes. I opened a storage room to find a giant popcorn machine with a large glass section where the popcorn would normally go. I filled it with water and put it under the ladder, forgetting that she didn't have feet. She looked at me in a way that said, "I can't get out." I looked up to find a few giant ribbons that had been used for acrobats at some point. I hoisted one to the ceiling and then wrapped it around her. She gracefully pulled herself out and into the popcorn machine. I used the same ribbon to slowly lower her down the stairs. Once we were behind the stage we began looking



for the closest exit. The only way out was to go on stage. So I took a deep breath and pushed her out. I ran as fast as I could. Everyone in the audience was concerned and baffled. They followed us as I ran out the door. The ocean was only meters away but the sand made it harder to push the cart. When I finally made it I looked behind me to see the two

men in tight suits running towards me. I quickly pushed Tesla into the ocean and ran as fast as I could. The audience cheered with excitement.

